

## The Hazard of Inactivity

**A**s many as 50 million Americans are living sedentary lives, which puts them at increased risk of health problems and early death, says the American Psychological Association. In a long-term study of more than 40,000 adults, 16 percent of deaths were directly related to sedentary living. This percentage did not include deaths complicated by other illnesses such as obesity, smoking, high cholesterol, or diabetes. Plain and simple, a lack of exercise was the culprit. Men with moderate levels of exercise on average lived six years longer than sedentary men. Close examination of more than 14,000 women showed that active women were 55 percent less likely to die of breast cancer than women who were not in good shape. This was after researchers had controlled for Body Mass Index, smoking, family history of breast cancer, and other possible risks.

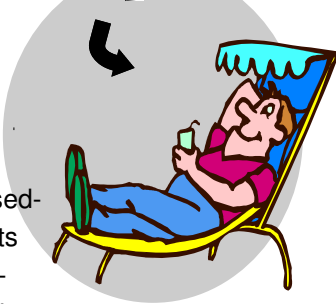
Source: [www.apa.org/releases/sedentary-lives.html](http://www.apa.org/releases/sedentary-lives.html).

## Time to Talk to the EAP

**E**APs help employees with personal problems that may affect job performance. But what if you don't have a personal problem and just want to talk confidentially about what's "going on" in the office—worries about workplace trends, internal politics, and related frustrations—or perhaps a work idea that you want to bounce off of a good listener? Is it appropriate to call the EAP for an appointment? Can these discussions also be confidential? The answer to these questions is Yes.



**CAUTION:**



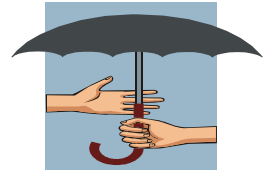
## "Sexting" with a Cell Phone

**S**ending sexually explicit images or photos via cell phone has been dubbed "sexting." It is a disturbing trend among young people that has made national news recently. The dangers of this practice need to be explained. Images can be uploaded easily from a phone to the Internet. From there, they can be downloaded anywhere in the world to be viewed and even exploited by others, including pornography distributors. In one recent survey of young cell phone users, almost all had no idea that distributing or holding on to such images could cause serious problems and may even be unlawful.



## Obligated to Get Along

**G**etting along with coworkers is a lot like dealing with family. There are bound to be occasional flare-ups. Although you don't always have to like your co-worker, the truth is you are obligated to get along at work. One powerful strategy for doing so is improving your "other-awareness" skills. Unlike self-awareness, other-awareness is the degree to which you are tuned in to the environment and what others feel or need. Simply asking is the fastest route to finding out, but asking isn't always that easy. You don't need to be a mind reader to practice reading signals. Is your coworker tired, frustrated, rushed, or anxious? Perhaps the co-worker being avoidant or non-talkative indicates a need for space and privacy? Other-awareness takes practice, but learning it enables us to build better relationships. If you could use other-awareness skill building, begin by spending a day noticing the unspoken signals others send.



# Help a Grieving Friend

**K**nowing what to do or say when a co-worker's or friend's loved one has died can be frightening. At times people don't know what to do, so they do nothing. But this may only add to the loneliness and isolation a grieving person is already feeling. The next time you are faced with this difficult situation, these suggestions can help you express the comfort and encouragement you want to give:

- Say nothing. If you know the person well, giving a hug, holding a hand or just being present can speak volumes.
- Be supportive. Don't offer advice, try to "fix" the grieving person or impose a grief timeline.
- Brief, sincere statements like these can be effective and comforting to a grieving friend or co-worker:

*I'm so sorry; I wish I had the right words; Please know I care; I don't know how you feel, but if I can help in any way, I'm here; You and your loved ones are in my thoughts and prayers; or I have such good memories of your loved one.*

More helpful suggestions concerning grief and loss can be found at [www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com).



# Become an Expert at Using Waiting-Time

**H**ow many months or years do we spend waiting?

Whether from waiting in lines or at a doctor's office, some social scientists figure it could be up to three years. You can't get your time back, but you can get even. Start by viewing waiting time as a gift or unexpected opportunity to increase your personal productivity. Decide what types of tasks you want to start or complete while waiting. You may add phone numbers to your cell phone address book, create a weekly menu or grocery list, send an encouraging note to a friend or listen to a self-development course on your iPod. Waiting time might become your secret friend. To determine the best activities, consider which tasks you are most likely putting off right now. These may be the best time-gap fillers with the highest returns, and may produce the best feelings because you were finally able to knock them off your to-do list.



# Toxic Relationship Troubles

**A** toxic relationship is a relationship that doesn't work. It produces negative physical and mental health consequences for its partners. The relationship is not simply a pattern of repeating disagreements, bickering, or periodic feelings of incompatibility. Instead, toxic relationships fuel worsening self-esteem and negative views of oneself. Fear of the other person because of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse is not uncommon. Toxic relationships are not characterized by reciprocal "give and take" or "I/you" conversations. Interactions in which each party feels respected and supported, heard, and valued are rare to nonexistent. Seeming shackled by patterns of dysfunctional behavior that leave you feeling drained is more common. It can be difficult to come to terms with the fact that you are in a toxic relationship. And it can be even harder to determine what to do about it. You need support. A professional counselor, employee assistance professional, or other mental health professional can offer perspective and help. You can discover how to feel safe and explore whether there is some way to intervene and make the changes necessary to salvage the relationship.



# H1N1 Flu Facts

**T**he Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

has established a Web site [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) as the one-stop source for almost anything you can think of regarding the H1N1 influenza virus, also referred to as swine flu. The Web site has news updates daily, and sometimes hourly, that can help you or your community better protect yourself and respond to a flu pandemic. Included are answers to dozens of common and not-so-common questions; facts and figures; reported cases and deaths; state-by-state information; action steps to prevent the spread of the virus in schools, workplaces, and households; and much more. Flu fact: Those most vulnerable to H1N1 are younger people, pregnant women, health care personnel, and people who have underlying health conditions.

